(c) whether any diversion of such rice to open market has come to Government's notice; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A quantity of 15.00 lakh tonnes has been allocated to the Government of Andhra Pradesh for Food for Work Programme in the drought affected areas so far during 2002-03.

(c) and (d) Some news paper cuttings and the complaints were received indicating the diversion of rice and irregularities involved for implementation of the Food for Work Programme in the State of Andhra Pradesh. The State Government was requested to investigate the matter. The State Government has intimated that action has been taken against the fair price shop dealers and officials who were involved in irregularities. About 50 Government Officials were suspended and 55 officials are under process for disciplinary action.

Allocation of Edible Oils to Andhra Pradesh for PDS

188. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Andhra Pradesh is being allocated less quota of edible oils for PDS than the demand put for by the State;

(b) if so, the details of the demand and allocations made during the last three years, year-wise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the State is not lifting even the allocated quota of edible oils and lifting very less quantity;

(d) if so, the reasons cited by the State Governments for this poor lifting; and

(e) the remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) to (c) The details of demand, allocation and lifting of edible oils for the PDS is respect of Andhra Pradesh for the last three years are as follows :

(Quantity in Tonnes)

Year	Demand	Allocation	Lifting/Offtake
1999-2000	98000	56700	12139
2000-2001	2400	10000	3000
2001-2002	NIL	NIL	NIL

(d) and (e) The main reason cited by the States, including Andhra Pradesh, for the poor offtake of edible oils is the lower level of open market prices *vis-a-vis* the Central Issue Price (CIP) of edible oils. In the past the Central Government has reduced the CIP in order to encourage the States to improve their offtake performance. At present, however, there is no import or allocation of edible oils for the PDS.

Dismantling of MSP

189. SHRI LAJPAT RAI :

SHRI SURESH BHARDWAJ :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are seriously considering the issue of dismantling the regime of MSP;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and how long it would take to finalise the issue;

(c) whether the Ministry of Agriculture has been or would be taken into confidence; and